PRODUCTION NOTES

Disney's "Safety" is inspired by the empowering story of former Clemson University football safety Ray McELrathBey, a young man facing a series of challenging circumstances, whose dedication and persistence help him to triumph over repeated adversities. Aided by his teammates and the Clemson community, he succeeds on the field while simultaneously raising and caring for his 11-year-old brother Fahmarr.

“Safety” stars Jay Reeves (“All American,” “The Tax Collector”) as Ray and newcomer Thaddeus J. Mixson as Fahmarr along with Corinne Foxx, Matthew Glave, Hunter Sansone, Amanda Warren, Miles Burris, Isaac Bell, Elijah Bell and James Badge Dale. It was directed by Reginald Hudlin (“Marshall”) and produced by Mark Ciardi, p.g.a. (“Secretariat,” “Miracle”) and Gordon Gray (“Million Dollar Arm,” ”The Rookie”) with a screenplay written by Nick Santora (“The Most Dangerous Game,” “The Fugitive”). Douglas S. Jones and Campbell McInnes served as executive producers.

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

Inspired by a true story of courage, determination and the pursuit of excellence, Disney’s powerful and moving drama “Safety” explores one player’s college sports experience when put up against seemingly insurmountable odds, while ultimately redefining what it means to have community, family and friendship.

Ray McELrathBey was already taking on a lot when he started his freshman year on a football scholarship at Clemson University, one of the most prestigious and demanding college football programs in the country. Not really understanding what he was getting himself into, but eager to learn about more than just football, Ray signs up for a full load of classes, 16 units.

Just as he’s settling into college life and making friends, including sports journalism major Kaycee, he gets word that his 11-year-old brother Fahmarr (aka Fay), is hanging out with drug dealers back home in Atlanta after their mother has been arrested for possession. Rather than put Fay into the foster care system, Ray decides to smuggle him into his dorm room, which is strictly against the school’s rules. It’s not long before he finds the added responsibility of caring for Fay, who’s high-maintenance, beginning to take a toll on his performance both on the football field and in the classroom.

With help from his roommate Daniel and his other teammates, Ray and Fay manage to keep the arrangement a secret for a while, but eventually Ray confides in Kaycee, who was just about give up on him. Ray finally breaks down and tells his coaches, who are furious he waited so long to come to them and concerned that it will jeopardize the team. Realizing the bind he's in, they help him figure out a way to keep Jay with him. They find them a modest off-campus apartment and a part time job as the building's handyman to help pay for it. Ray lays down the law with Fay, who steps up to help lighten his brother's load. Thinking a little publicity will help their cause, Kaycee writes a story for the school paper about Ray and Fay, and the entire Clemson community rallies around the two brothers to help them stay together.

With everyone's support, Ray starts to prove his worth at football and his academic work soars. But the bubble is burst when a school official alerts the coaches that by accepting outside assistance, Ray's violated the terms of his scholarship. Once again, Ray finds himself in a position where he must choose between keeping Fay and continuing on at Clemson. Unwilling to give up, he chooses to fight what he considers an unfair system.

A 14-YEAR JOURNEY

Producer Mark Ciardi, who has been responsible for many sports-themed films over the years, including "The Rookie," "Miracle," "Invincible," "Million Dollar Arm," "McFarland, USA," among others, had been trying to bring Ray McELrathBey 's story to the screen since 2006.

Ciardi recalls, "I remember when it happened, how it affected me emotionally. I got really choked up watching the news pieces about him. I felt like if those five-minute clips could affect me that much, then I have to see if this could be a movie."

Ciardi found Ray's story unique. He says, "I don't recall a story where you had a brother taking care of his brother and assuming the duties of a father and a mother. He had to help his family out and he did something that would overwhelm a lot of kids and students, who might not have

elected to do it. So, I think when he's just started college and his life's in front of him, to go backwards and to essentially become a parent, is a lot to ask. But he stepped up, and it was really amazing."

Ciardi brought writer Nick Santora ("The Most Dangerous Game," "Scorpion") aboard to begin working on a script inspired by Ray's experiences at Clemson that would tell this underdog story with emotion and humor and the same triumphant spirit that made Ciardi's earlier films so popular with audiences.

It didn't take long for him to find a studio interested in making it, but for various reasons, it sat in development for over a decade. Ciardi found a new home for the project in 2017 when Disney was looking for content for its new streaming service, Disney+, which the company planned to launch a few years later. They were enthusiastic about it and keen to find a director. After a wide search, they selected Reginald Hudlin, who had just come off of directing the bio-pic "Marshall," about Thurgood Marshall, the crusading lawyer who would become the first African-American Supreme Court Justice.

THE PERFECT DIRECTOR

Remembers Hudlin, "When I first read the script for "Safety," I was so excited and moved and inspired. This young man—Ray's 19 years old--is taking on a level of responsibility that's beyond most people. And I don't care what your background is, what your education is –
he's doing too much. And, through sheer force of will, he manages to do it all. So it's a story of great individual triumph but also brotherhood--the entire community, his football team and the wider university all join in to help him. A story with both those elements is always welcome but particularly in the times we're living in now."

Hudlin continues, "I think every day in America, people are put in impossible situations. You know that most households in America cannot afford a $400 financial emergency, $400 and

everything falls apart. Someone breaks their elbow, or you know, there's an unexpected bill of any type. So, I think this movie will speak to all those people out there who are somehow just making it, people for whom failure is not an option. Here's a guy who's just like them who worked hard and did the impossible and inspired a community by his efforts to say this guy deserves our support. And he's earned it because of his incredible dedication."

The filmmakers wanted the film to not only capture the hardships Ray had to endure at Clemson, but also the humor between Ray and Fay and Ray's teammates.

Hudlin explains, "Ray is a very serious guy. very aware of his responsibilities. Fay is the quintessential little brother, checking everything out, joking all the time. He's so funny. They're a perfect Batman and Robin team. And the interplay of Ray and his fellow teammates is hilarious because you have every kind of personality from guys who want to crunch bones all day to guys who just want to have fun out on the field."

It was important to the filmmakers that the real Ray McELrathBey , whose story inspired the film's screenplay, be involved in the making of the "Safety." Over the nearly 13 years that it took for the project to get to the production stage, Ray had learned to temper his expectations.

McELrathBey explains, "When Mark initially came to me, he told me my story was very inspiring and that they thought it would be a great motion picture, but that doesn't mean that we're gonna make the movie this year, or next year. He said this could take 10 or 20 or 30 years. It might not ever happen. So after all this time, when Mark told me it was actually happening, I was in disbelief. It's still unreal to me."

Ray was thrilled that Hudlin would be directing, as Hudlin was involved with some of his favorite movies. He especially appreciated that Hudlin wanted his input.

McELrathBey says, “One of the things Reggie tells me is ‘I’ll take any suggestions. Just don’t be upset if I don’t use it.’ And so I give him my suggestions and sometimes he takes them, sometimes he doesn’t, but it still gives me a wonderful feeling that he’s taking time out to do that. I feel like the story is in good hands because of that. Also he’s the guy that Mark picked, and I’ve known Mark for over a decade now, so I trust his judgment as far as that’s concerned.”

CASTING THE LEADS

Finding the right actor to portray the pivotal role of Ray McELrathBey was a challenge. The filmmakers finally found their Ray in Jay Reeves, who previously had recurring roles on the CW series “All American” and David Ayers’ “The Tax Collector.”

Ciardi recalls, “It was a big, long process. Many actors read for the role. It wasn’t an easy task for an actor to get all the facets of the character.”

Hudlin explains, “We wanted the best actor that could pull off all aspects of the role. And when we read Jay Reeves, he was perfect. He is a wonderful actor. He has an incredible, off the charts charisma. He really looks a lot like the real Ray, so if you put them side by side they’re at least cousins, if not brothers. And he’s good on the field. Our football coach said he’s worked with so many athletes on so many different football movies and Jay is the most talented of the guys he’s worked with. So, it’s really exciting to have a guy who really had everything required to play the role.”

Reeves was thrilled by the opportunity. He remembers, “This story just hit me--the life, the substance, the heartfelt moments that it brought to me and it just spoke to my heart. I ‘m so grateful to be a part of it. It’s a beautiful story, and Ray is a phenomenal guy.”

When asked about the actor who portrays him in the film, McELrathBey says, “Jay Reeves is a wonderful human being. Mark Ciardi showed me Jay’s audition tape, and I was really moved.

It turns out once they did decide that he was the guy we connected and we found that we live less than a mile away from each other. Like point five miles exactly. Just that alone—that we were right in the same vicinity, we went to the same gym, but never crossed paths-- was, unique and kind of destiny, like it was a faith thing, it was meant to be. Having him portraying me is a wonderful thing."

Reeves was in awe of his director. He says, "Reggie is a phenomenal director with a crazy resume. I look at him as a role model. Since day one, Reggie came in with great energy. That type of energy helps everyone to stay motivated, especially on those hard nights when it's 4am, fourth quarter, and we've got a minute left and we're all gassed and tired. It feels good to have a great leader like that who's pushing us through and just saying, 'Hey, we're here together.'

To describe his character's relationship with his younger brother Fahmarr, who comes to live with him in the dorm when their mother goes to rehab, Reeves searches for the right word and comes up with several.

"It's inspirational, heart-heartwarming, real, tangible. Powerful. And funny. Really funny."

To play Fay, the filmmakers chose newcomer Thaddeus J. Mixson.

Says Hudlin, "From the first time I saw Thaddeus on tape I was like, whoa, who was that? He blew everyone else away. Then he came and auditioned and blew us away again. So, we tested him with other actors and had him do improvisation. We had him do some light, fun stuff and then some really tough, dark stuff because the movie is a lot of different things. And he nailed it every time. And we said, this is fantastic. This is a really unique young man. He's also polite and wonderful and he and Ray are great together.

Says Reeves about his co-star, "What I love is that he brings himself, you know. Thaddeus is a work of art himself. He brings that a hundred percent to this role. Since the day I met him and

he gave me a head nod in the room, I was like, 'Oh, this little boy got spunk.' He puts his leg up and he wasn't afraid, so having that confidence and bravado makes me want to be like him, you know? He raises the bar and you don't see that a lot with 11-year-olds, someone who can talk to you like that and is not afraid to voice their opinion."

He continued, "There's moments when I'm acting with Thaddeus that I can't help laughing because this little boy is just a handful."

Like Ray, Fahmarr was part of the filmmaking family, and he had the opportunity to spend time with the young actor portraying his younger self in the film.

He says, "T.J. is an amazingly talented young man. He is an amazing actor. He's just a great dude, a great kid. And it's just amazing to see that he has so much dedication towards it, so much dedication and to bringing the story to life. And he takes it so seriously, always asking me questions. "

As with most films inspired by true stories and real characters, "Safety" takes some dramatic license with its storytelling. One of its inventions is the character of Kaycee, the sports journalist love interest for Ray. Corinne Foxx, the 26-year-old daughter of actor Jamie Foxx, who's appeared with her father on the game show series "Beat Shazam," in the feature film "47 Meters Down: Unhinged" and in MTV's "Sweet/Vicious," portrays this forthright, confident young woman who really understands sports and tries to understand Ray.

Hudlin recalls, "When Corinne came in to read, she just blew us away because she naturally embodied all of Kaycee's qualities."

Foxx says, "When I read the script, I fell in love with this project. I actually have two 13-year-old sisters myself, so I really connected to the connection that Ray and Fay have. And I know if I was

in this situation, I would take care of my sisters, too. So I love their relationship, which is so heartwarming. you're really rooting for him.

Explains Foxx, “Ray and Casey hit it off quite early because Casey is so into sports. And so they have a really cute relationship where she kind of pushes them and she's very straightforward. Then she asks him out multiple times, and he kind of hesitates because he's so nervous about everything going on in his life, kind of scaring her away. She tries to figure out what's going on with Ray and why he's acting so funny around her. Every time Ray runs into Kaycee, he's dodging her and running out and she's left confused. She knows something’s up. Eventually he opens up to her about what's going on, and while she isn’t happy that he kept it from her for so long, she admires what he’s taken on.”

Says Reeves, “Kaycee is that one girl that motivates him, that wants him to do better but also helps him. She’s the only person in the story that Ray tells what’s really going on, exactly what it is. The best way to describe Kaycee is that she’s the trustworthy friend – not even just girlfriend, but friend – that we all need.“

Reeves was thoroughly impressed by Foxx. “Corinne’s smart,” he says. “She asks questions, questions that make me think she’s not just thinking about herself. She’s definitely a team player. Corinne is gonna have a beautiful career and working with her has been so refreshing and nice. She’s dope.”

Ciardi was especially impressed with how she and Reeves performed together.

He says, “There was this real kind of magic between the two of them. They have absolute chemistry together.”

THE SUPPORTING CAST

"Safety" features a talented group of supporting players, including Matthew Glave ("Argo," "The Wedding Singer") as Clemson Head Coach Bowden; Hunter Sansone (CW's "Stargirl") as Ray's roommate Daniel; James Badge Dale ("The Departed," "World War Z") as Clemson Coach Brad Simmons; Amanda Warren ("Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," "Mother!") as the brother's loving but troubled mother Tonya; Miles Burris ("A Royal Christmas Ball") as Clemson team captain "Killer" Ron Keller; twins Isaac and Elijah Bell as Ray's twin teammates Eugene/Fresh and Marcus/Pop, respectively; Luke Tennie as teammate Solomon; James Dumont ("The Dallas Buyers Club," "Jurassic World") as Clemson administrator Mike Ferro and Brett Rice ("Sully, "Foxcatcher") as NCAA Compliance Board Chairman Gregory Diamond.

BELOW-THE-LINE TALENT

The film's below-the-line talent includes Co-Producers Mark Ellis and Jordan Feagan; Editor Terel Gibson, ACE ("We Are Your Friends," "The D Train"); Production Designer Richard Hoover ("Marshall," "42"); Original Score Composer Marcus Miller ("Marshall"), Director of Photography Shane Hurlbut, ASC ("Act of Valor," "Need for Speed"); and Executive Producers Douglas S. Jones (former Walden Media production executive) and Campbell McInnes ("Chappaquiddick," "The Miracle Season").

FILMING AT CLEMSON

When the filmmakers contacted Clemson to look into the possibility of filming on campus, the school went out of their way to make it work.

Hudlin recalls, “Clemson generously said we love this movie, we love Ray, we’re going to let you film during a Clemson football game.”

The production actually planned their shooting schedule around a game where Clemson would be competing with Charlotte they thought would be a little less intense than some of the games scheduled for the beginning of the season. They built everything around that Saturday for the game sequences and planned to film all their wide shots around campus and scenes taking place in the film and weight rooms the week leading up to it. When it finally came time for the company to shoot at Clemson, it turned out that the game was going to be televised live, so they ended up with less time than they originally expected: exactly half of half time--seven minutes and twenty seconds to shoot four scenes. The scenes were three different plays and the end of the film.

Ciardi confesses, “We probably put more effort into these seven minutes than any other part of the film. We had to be really accurate.”

With five cameras on the field, thirteen cameras throughout the stadium, 185 extras, 45 on the football field, there were special stunts all choreographed to pull off four scenes in seven minutes and twenty seconds. Run down to the field from the top of the hill, perform the plays, and get off the field. All in front of 85,000 die-hard Clemson fans.

“It’s not as tough as what Ray had to do, but it’s no joke,” laughs Hudlin. “It was really important to capture the excitement of a Clemson football game. A lot of NFL professional football teams don’t have stadiums this big. I’ve been to three games here, and they’ve all been packed. We wanted to get that excitement, that enthusiasm. You can’t recreate a lot of that.”

The director continues, “Plus, the amount of special little details that we got because we shot on the Clemson campus, because we had the Clemson football organization helping us to make

sure we had every detail right. It really made a huge difference and I really think the audience will appreciate it."

ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

The "Safety" original soundtrack on Walt Disney Records features score by critically acclaimed Grammy®-winning jazz musician/producer and composer Marcus Miller ("Marshall"), plus the original song "Hold Us Together" performed by Grammy®-winning singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist H.E.R., which she wrote and produced in collaboration with Josiah Bassey and Dernst "D'Mile" Emile II.

ABOUT THE CAST

New Jersey's JAY REEVES (Ray McELrathBey) is a one of a kind creative in the modern day, an actor, an artist, a producer and much more. Reeves is already paving his own legendary path for those who come after him. With a pure sense of creativity and drive, Jay Reeves isn't motivated by clout, "I feel like...as content creators [we] have the obligation to hold a reflection mirror up to the world," Reeves says. Whether in his performance as an actor, his honesty as an artist or his creativity and range as an executive producer, Jay Reeves proves time and time again to be a prolific force. As the year comes to an end, Reeves has plenty lined up in film, music and the like.

Jay Reeves' work ethic and willingness to learn in any space is what has gotten him in the position he's in right now. Growing up Jay Reeves was an athlete and in fact ranked #9 out of 100 in the Western Region of Underclassmen. After playing a few games in a starting role at Pasadena City College, Reeves would leave the team and college to pursue a career in acting. Supporting himself turned out to be a much greater challenge and saw our hero become homeless. Eventually a car accident saw Reeves return to Charlotte where he picked up right

where he left off in regards to pursuing an acting career. Reeves would apply for college and in fact receive a scholarship to a school in New York, but Reeves had bigger plans and goals for the future.

Between acting and music, Jay Reeves is a proven “modern day renaissance man” during an era where so many talk of “staying in your lane.” “I feel like versatility is important these days because it’s what makes you unique,” Reeves states. In 2018, Reeves made his television debut on the CW’s critically acclaimed drama, "All-American" as Shawn Scott. Moreover Jay Reeves relentless work ethic shines as while filming All-American, Reeves was completing roles for other projects. Already Reeves has worked with people like Shia LaBeouf, Denzel Washington and with brands like Dr. Pepper. As Jay Reeves continues to elevate, he’s proving that he can stretch his arms into any medium and bring creativity, new perspectives and dedication to everything he does.

Jay Reeves is just getting started though, last year “was a year of hustle and elevation” according to Reeves. With him continuing his long standing work with Dr. Pepper this led to Reeves working with Toyota as well. This year had Reeves step into the music realm as both an emcee and a producer, releasing his sophomore single “South Central”. In just the 7 months its been out Reeves has racked up over 50K listens and watches between Spotify and YouTube alone. It doesn’t stop there, Jay Reeves is doing incredible acting work too. As 2020 comes to a close, Reeves has new music on the way and wants to do more to get behind the camera as a director. Jay Reeves is a name we’ll be speaking about for decades to come.

THADDEUS J. MIXSON (Fahmarr McELrathBey) danced and rapped his way into the hearts of millions of viewers nationwide at the tender age of 7 by making his debut on the hit NBC show ‘Little Big Shots,’ hosted by Steve Harvey. Rapping, singing and dancing became an obsession for the younger Thaddeus but since that time, he has added acting to his repertoire. by landing his lead role in “Safety.” Shortly after, Thaddeus proved that acting would be more than a past

time by securing his next role in the Marvel film, “Till Death,” starring Michael Colter, Evangeline Lilly, and Jason Sudeikis.

It should be no surprise that Thaddeus takes his craft seriously, which is why he took on the moniker ‘Papa Jay’ as his music industry persona, which properly depicts his “old soul” and ability beyond his years. Thaddeus hasn’t forgotten his roots in music either. Case in point, the release of his EP titled “Born Gifted” and his work with top music producers, Hitmaka, Harmony, Samuels, and J. Classic.

Thaddeus’ current success may appear to have happened overnight, but he has been working as a professional since age 5, after appearing on the live show ‘Baby Talk’ with a star-studded cast that included stand-up comedians and actors, Whitney Cummings and Chris D’Elia. Thaddeus received rave reviews for improvisation and his comedic timing. He absolutely has a passion for live performances, which led him to be the opening act for the Trinidadian star, Machel Montano where he was introduced by Will Smith. Thaddeus was able to cut his teeth in the entertainment industry by appearing as a young Nick Cannon in the music video “Dance Floor” and then gave us an early glimpse of his dramatic acting ability after playing a part in an independent film/documentary.Thaddeus remains grounded in his interest and enjoys being a kid. His favorite hobbies are basketball and video games. He would also like to create his own clothing and sneaker line. Thaddeus’ imagination has no boundaries. His favorite saying is “Practice Makes Perfect” and this guy won’t stop until his career in entertainment is everything that he imagined.

CORINNE FOXX (Kaycee) is following in the footsteps of her award-winning father, Jamie Foxx. The California-native is currently the co-host and deejay on the hit FOX television show, ”Beat Shazam,” where she works alongside her father. After three very successful seasons, the show will return for a fourth season. Corinne also launched her own podcast in August 2020 alongside her best friend called, “Am I Doing This Right?” The evergreen podcast acts as a guide

book for young people on how to kickstart their adulthood, and already has listeners in over 51 countries!

After “Safety,” she will also star in and produce the Netflix father-daughter comedy “Dad Stop Embarrassing Me,” alongside her father.

Most recently, Corinne starred in “47 Meters Down: Uncaged” which released wide on August 16th by Entertainment Studios. This is the sequel to the original 2017 film “47 Meters Down” which starred Mandy Moore and Claire Holt.

Some of Corinne’s most rewarding work is being an advocate for causes and organizations that are close to her heart. In November 2018, Corinne was honored with the Young Leaders Creating A Better World for All Award by the Women Economic Forum for her philanthropic efforts – which she has dedicated towards promoting mental health awareness.

In 2017, Corinne became an ambassador for NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, to promote legislative and cultural changes towards mental health in the United States. This past summer, the organization invited her to speak at The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, which is the biggest annual event in the creative communications industry. Corinne was in great company, as past speakers have included Al Gore, Mindy Kaling, Kim Kardashian, amongst many others. In addition to working with NAMI, she also works alongside Girl Up!, a United Nations foundation that works to cultivate young girls as leaders and advocates.

In July of 2017, she launched her own lifestyle website and online marketplace, Foxxtales, featuring interviews with influential women, personal essays and a shop featuring and promoting female-founded businesses.

In 2016, Corinne was honored as Miss Golden Globe by the Hollywood Foreign Press

Association. Corinne held the responsibility of presenting Golden Globe winners with awards and carrying on the legacy of the prestigious title.

At the age of 19, Corinne was signed by modeling agency, LA Models. Since then, she has gained representation in New York and London. She has been shot in campaigns for Dolce & Gabbana, Kenneth Cole, Wet N Wild cosmetics and Nasty Gal. She has walked the runway for

Kanye West's Yeezy collection, D&G, and Sherri Hill. Corinne has also had features in Vogue Magazine, NYLON Magazine, ASOS Magazine and W Magazine.

Corinne has dedicated time to her acting studies at the American Academy for Dramatic Arts and Anthony Meindl Acting Workshop.

Before entering the entertainment industry, Corinne prioritized her higher education. She attended the University of Southern California in 2012. By 2016, Corinne had graduated from USC, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations.

In her free time, Corinne is a dedicated a writer, from short stories to poems, from essays to screenplays.

MATTHEW GLAVE (Coach Tommy Bowden) - Versatility is his hallmark in a career spanning 3 decades in Film, Television & on Stage. He was masterful as the jerk fiancée Glenn Gulia in "The Wedding Singer," he was the rival basketball coach opposite Ben Affleck in "The Way Back" and played Colonel Chuck Scott in the Oscar®-winning film, "Argo," directed by Ben Affleck. Matthew played Chuck Yeager in Damian Chazelle's "First Man." He recently starred in the multi-award winning indie "Funny Story"as well as the indie "International Falls." Prentice Penny just directed him in the Amazon feature "Uncorked."

Matthew has been on countless critically acclaimed TV shows including: “Mad Men,” “American Horror Story,” “Narcos,” “Feud: Bette and Joan,” “Grace and Frankie,” “Hell On Wheels,” “The Shield,” “NYPD Blue,” “The X-Files,” “The West Wing,” “ER,” “Shameless,” “Suits” and “Stargate.”

Matthew has been on every season of “Better Things,” “The Rookie,” “Angie Tribeca” and “Girlfriends’ Guide To Divorce.”

Actor on the rise, HUNTER SANSONE (Daniel) is quickly making a name for himself through the dynamic and versatile characters he has brought to life on screen.

In addition to his role in “Safety,” on the television front, Sansone currently stars as the artistic Cameron Mahkent also known as Icicle Jr., son of the villainous Icicle, in DC Universe’s hit CW series “Stargirl” opposite Brec Bassinger, Luke Wilson, and Amy Smart. Season one concluded with Icicle seemingly dead at the hands of the JSA. Season two is currently in production and slated to return in 2021. Additional credits for Sansone include CBS’ “S.W.A.T.” and Bazelevs Entertainment’s 2018 indie “Unfollowed.”
Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Sansone grew up spending his week in the city and his weekends on a 123 acre farm with hundreds of animals. Growing up he never thought about pursuing acting until his mom (professional singer and vocal coach) encouraged him to look into it. He hopped into the local acing studio, Creative Actors Workshop, and took classes under the guidance of Scott Arthur Allen. From there he made the move to Los Angeles and studied acting at the Larry Moss Studio and Michael Woolson Studio. He went on to book roles in indie feature films before landing his starring role in “Unfollowed.” He has been working ever since.

When he isn’t on set, you can find him spending time with his family, in the gym, or on his farm riding horses. He also enjoys spending time with his two adopted dogs, Max and Buddy. Sansone supports the Stand Up For Pits Foundation and wants to use his platform to make a

difference in the fight to end animal abuse. His goal is to convert part of his farm into an animal sanctuary and open up animal sanctuaries around the world.

Sansone currently splits his time between Los Angeles, Atlanta, and St. Louis.

AMANDA WARREN (Tonya McELrathBey) well known for playing Lucy Warburton on HBO's/Peabody Awarded “The Leftovers,” was born and raised in New York and received her BFA from New York University and her MFA from Yale School of Drama. She began her professional career on stage receiving rave reviews for her work in “Three Sisters” (Classical Theatre of Harlem), “Golden Age,” (world premiere/Kennedy Center) and “When I Come to Die” (Lincoln Center Theatre receiving an AUDELCO nomination).

Amanda can most recently be seen in a recurring role on the final season of CBS’s “Madam Secretary,” opposite Tea Leoni, and is recurring in Apple’s single camera comedy series, “Dickinson,” starring Hailee Steinfeld. Prior, she starred in the Blumhouse/USA anthology series, “The Purge,” as well as playing the attention-getting role of ‘Mayor Warburton’ in season 1 of HBO’s “The Leftovers.” Other memorable roles include Netflix’s “Black Mirror,” “House of Cards” and the critically acclaimed NBC series, “This Is Us.” Additional appearances in television include “NCIS: New Orleans,” “FBI,” “The Good Wife,” “Gossip Girl,” “The Closer,” “Taken,” Royal Pains,” “Detroit 1-8-7,” and “Rubicon.” Up next, Amanda will be starring in National Geographic’s “Genius: Aretha” and the CBS pilot “Ways & Means” alongside Patrick Dempsey and Troian Bellisario.

Amanda’s feature highlights include roles in the award-winning Fox Searchlight film, “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri,” Sony Pictures’ “Roman J Israel, ESQ,” Martin McDonagh’s “Seven Psychopaths” and HBO’s original film “Wizard of Lies.”

MILES BURRIS (Ron Keller) is a former NFL linebacker for the Oakland Raiders. He played college football at San Diego State University, racking up several awards for his performance on and off the field. The day after he was drafted by the Oakland Raiders he proposed to his high school sweetheart, Jena. Starting at linebacker his rookie year, Miles went on to become a leading tackler and staple of the Raider's defense.

Since retiring from football, he now takes the same grit, dedication, and determination he learned from football and applies it to his craft as an actor. He's having another fast start in the acting world, racking up several credits including: "Code Black," "Lucifer," "Single Parents," "Teachers" and more.

Now he takes on his biggest role, promoted to Daddy! Miles and Jena can't wait to watch "Safety" with their son, Beau Miles Burris.

Identical twin brothers ELIJAH BELL (Marcus/Pop) and ISAAC BELL (Eugene/Fresh) began their respective careers as child models and as the years went on into their teenage years, they grew interested in acting for TV and film.

The Bell twins always knew they were destined for the big screen. Watching movies played a pivotal role in their upbringing and they were enamored by their favorite actors/actresses, such as Denzel Washington, Leonardo DiCaprio, Julia Roberts, Will Smith, Matt Damon, Shia LaBeouf, Robert de Niro, Marlon Brando, Brad Pitt, Matthew McConaughey, Viola Davis, Meryl Streep, Octavia Spencer, Julia Roberts and Charlize Theron. Some of their favorite movies that have inspired their acting dreams include "Pretty Woman" (Julia Roberts), "Harry Potter" (Daniel Radcliffe), "Good Will Hunting" (Matt Damon), "Training Day" (Denzel Washington), "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" (Johnny Depp), "The Notebook" (Ryan Gosling), and "Peter Pan" (Jeremy Shumpert).

Isaac and Elijah have trained and studied at Mad Acting studio in Los Angeles, California with acting coach Max Decker.

The twins are making their film debuts in “Safety.”

JAMES BADGE DALE (Coach Simmons) has built an impressive resume playing a variety of roles, showing off his remarkable range as an actor.

Most recently seen as the lead in the very provocative Starz limited series “Hightown” depicting the opioid epidemic in Cape Cod. The show, which would mark Dale’s return to television, is executively produced by Jerry Bruckheimer and has been renewed for a second season.

Previous to “Hightown,” Dale starred in “Mickey and The Bear,” written and directed by Annabelle Attanasio. The film, which made its world premiere debut at the SXSW Film Festival, follows a strong-willed Montana teenager navigating a loving but volatile relationship with her veteran father, played by Dale. After its success at SXSW, “Mickey and the Bear” was selected as one of nine features to be showcased by France’s Association for the Diffusion of Independent Cinema (ACID) at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

In addition, Dale was seen in Warner Brother’s film adaptation of “The Kitchen”, opposite Melissa McCarthy, Tiffany Haddish and Elisabeth Moss. Based on the DC/Vertigo female-led crime comic book series, the film was released in August, 2019.

Dale also starred in Nia DaCostas’ “Little Woods” opposite Lily James and Tessa Thompson, Henry Dunham and Dallas Sonnier’s drama “The Standoff at Sparrow Creek” and Tim Sutton’s film adaptation of the Frank Bill novel, “Donnybrook.” Released back to back in January and February of 2019, both films made their debut at the 2018 Toronto International Film Festival and at the same time, Dale was seen in Netflix’s thriller “Hold the Dark,” directed by Jeremy Saulnier costarring Jeffrey Wright and Alexander Skarsgard.

In 2017, Dale was seen in Sony's "Only The Brave," opposite Josh Brolin, Jeff Bridges and Miles Teller. The film, directed by Joseph Kosinski, followed an elite crew of firefighters who bravely battled a wildfire in Arizona's Yarnell Hill which claimed the lives of 19 of their 20 members.

Prior, Dale was seen in two pictures based on true stories; Paramount Pictures' "13 Hours," directed by Michael Bay and Sony Pictures' "The Walk," directed by Robert Zemeckis, where he played Jean-Pierre, the flamboyant Frenchman and fried of high wire artist, Phillippe Petit. He first worked with Zemeckis on "Flight" opposite Denzel Washington.

Additional film credits include Shane Black's "Ironman 3", Marc Forster's "World War Z" and Jerry Bruckheimer/Disney's "The Lone Ranger," directed by Gore Verbinski. Dale garnered rave reviews in Peter Landesman's "Parkland," playing Robert Oswald, brother to Lee Harvey and impressed in Steve McQueen's "Shame". He was also seen in Martin Scorsese's Academy Award® winning "The Departed" and as politician William Hamilton in Robert Redford's "The Conspirator."

In television, he is most recognized for his lead performance as Robert Leckie in the Emmy® and Peabody awarded HBO miniseries, "The Pacific," executive produced by Tom Hanks, Steven Spielberg and Gary Goetzman. Dale starred in AMC's critically acclaimed series "Rubicon" and is also remembered as Chase Edmunds, Kiefer Sutherland's partner in the hit television series "24."

In 2017, Dale owned the stage in the Robert Schenkkan off-Broadway production of "Building The Wall" opposite Tamara Tunie. Directed by Ari Edelson, the powerful dystopian drama sketched a dark vision of an America in recovery.

Dale is the son of late Broadway, film and television star Anita Morris and two-time Tony® Award-winning Director/Choreographer Grover Dale. He followed his parents onto the stage making his Off-Broadway debut in 2003 with The Flea Theatre Company.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Oscar® and Emmy® nominated producer and director REGINALD HUDLIN (Director) **i**s one of the most influential filmmakers of his generation.

His latest film, "The Black Godfather," is an award-winning documentary currently streaming on Netflix. He also recently directed the legal thriller "Marshall," starring Chadwick Boseman as Thurgood Marshall, with Josh Gad, Kate Hudson and Sterling K. Brown.

Hudlin is the producer of "Emperor," a Civil War-era historical drama, which premiered on Starz on August 18, 2020 and stars Dayo Okeniyi, James Cromwell and Kat Graham.

Hudlin is the first African American to executive produce the Emmys,® which aired on September 20, 2020.

In February 2016, Hudlin produced The Oscars®, for which he subsequently received an Emmy® nomination. Additionally, he has been the executive producer of the NAACP Image Awards for the past seven years.

In 2012, he was nominated for a Best Picture Academy Award® as one of the producers of Quentin Tarantino's Academy Award® and Golden Globe®-winning film "Django Unchained," which is one of the top-grossing Westerns of all time.

In his illustrious career, Hudlin has written, directed and/or produced numerous popular feature films including “House Party,” “Boomerang,” “Great White Hype” and “Bebe’s Kids”. For television, he was an executive producer of “The Boondocks” and wrote and produced “The Black Panther” animated series based on the comic book series he wrote for four years.

Hudlin is one of the few filmmakers to also run a major media company. He was the first president of entertainment for Black Entertainment Television, the biggest black media company in the world. He created B.E.T.’s first full slate of original shows and an award-winning news division.

Hudlin has been honored by the NAACP, The American Civil Liberties Union, The United Negro College Fund, The Sundance Film Festival, The American Film Institute, The San Diego Comic Con, The African American Film Critics Association, and many more venerable organizations.

NICK SANTORA (Writer) - After the first screenplay he ever wrote won "Best Screenplay of The Competition" at the New York International Independent Film Festival, Nick Santora was hired to write an episode for “The Sopranos.” Soon afterward he decided to quit being a lawyer and try screenwriting full time.

He was hired as a staff writer for the CBS drama “The Guardian” where he was promoted to Co-Producer in less than a year. From there, he went on to write/produce for “Law & Order” and then found a home at “Prison Break” where he stayed for the entire run of the series. After Prison Break, he was the co-creator/showrunner of “Breakout Kings” and later went on to create and run the hit show “Scorpion” for CBS.

Nick has also succeeded in unscripted television, having created and executive produced the hit reality show “Beauty & The Geek.”

Nick also writes feature films, having been a credited writer on Marvel's "The Punisher: War Zone" as well "The Longshots"--a film that Nick also produced. He has written "Dog Gone," a film he will also produce for Netflix. His feature TIME & TEMPERATURE made the prestigious "Black List".

Nick also created and ran "Most Dangerous Game," starring Christoph Waltz and Liam Hemsworth, and a reimagining of "The Fugitive" starring Kiefer Sutherland and Boyd Holbrook. Nick currently is showrunning "Reacher," based on Lee Child's book series, for Amazon, as well as "Fubar," a show he also created for Netflix that will be Arnold Schwarzeneggar's first foray into television.

Nick is also a national best-selling novelist with his novels "Slip & Fall" and "Fifteen Digits" having been published all over the world, including Poland, Japan, Italy, Australia, New Zealand and England.

Nick also wrote a children's book entitled "I Want an Alien For Christmas" and wrote and produced two hit novelty holiday songs "Monster In Love" for Halloween and "It's Gonna Be A Kick-Ass Christmas". The songs have been featured in multiple television shows.

MARK CIARDI, p.g.a. (Producer) is the Founder & CEO of Select Films with a rich breadth of experience as a film producer. Prior to Select Films, Mark was the co-founder of Mayhem Pictures that had an overall first look deal with Walt Disney Studios for 12 years. Recently, Mark produced "Chappaquiddick," and "The Miracle Season" with LD Entertainment. At Mayhem, Mark produced several films including "The Rookie," "Miracle," "Invincible," "Secretariat," "Million Dollar Arm" and "McFarland, USA," starring Kevin Costner. Mark also produced the Emmy®-winning ESPN 30 for 30 documentary, "Big Shot," and the 30 for 30 documentary, "42 to 1."

Mark played baseball at the University of Maryland, where he earned his B.S. in Business. He was drafted in 1983 by the Milwaukee Brewers organization and was called up to the majors in 1987.

Mark is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and serves on the board of trustees at the University of Maryland.

GORDON GRAY (Producer) heads Mayhem Pictures, a film and television production company that has established an indelible brand of quality entertainment with broad appeal. Gray's latest theatrical release, the Warner Bros. feature, "The Way Back," directed by Gavin O'Connor, written by Brad Ingelsby, and starring Ben Affleck opened to rave reviews. The company's first film with Disney, "The Rookie" (2002) starring Dennis Quaid, was a critical and commercial success. Further feature films followed: "Miracle" (2004) starring Kurt Russell, and "Invincible" (2006) starring Mark Wahlberg. Gray has most recently made his way into the horror genre with the October release of the Paramount Players feature, "Spell," directed by Mark Tonderai, written by Kurt Wimmer, and starring Omari Hardwick and Loretta Devine. Other pictures include "The Game Plan" (2007), the hit family comedy starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, which opened No. 1 for two consecutive weeks at the domestic box office and grossed nearly $148 million worldwide. Through Mayhem, Gray also produced "Secretariat" (2010) starring Diane Lane and John Malkovich, "Million Dollar Arm" (2014) directed by Craig Gillespie and starring Jon Hamm, and "McFarland, USA" (2015) directed by Niki Caro and starring Kevin Costner.

Mayhem also has a presence in television. Mayhem produced "Big Shot," directed by Kevin Connolly, an Emmy® award-winning documentary that aired as part of ESPN's acclaimed "30 for 30" series in the fall of 2013. Gray is currently executive producing "Mare of Easttown," an HBO limited series written by Brad Ingelsby and starring Kate Winslet, as well as Emmy® nominated

“Most Dangerous Game” a Quibi action thriller written by Nick Santora, directed by Phil Abraham, and starring Liam Hemsworth and Christoph Waltz.

Gray is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

DOUGLAS S. JONES (Executive Producer) was head of physical production at Walden Media for 10 years from 2006 to 2016, working on films with budgets from $3 to $300 million. Walden Media is known for its dedication to family films, among them “The Chronicles of Narnia” series.

After leaving Walden Jones moved to line producing and was asked by New Regency to apply his skills to “The Revenant,” a challenging location picture, already in production. Since then he has executive produced “Togo,” “Safety” and “Chappaquiddick.”

Jones began his film career in the mail room of New Line, when it was a small company of fifteen people. He was interested in the business side of filmmaking and given the opportunity to move into physical production and production accounting. After three years at New Line, he became a freelance production accountant and production manager.

Jones has a degree in business and film from Chapman University in California.

CAMPBELL MCINNES (Executive Producer) is the EVP of Feature Production and Development at Select Films and the head of the company’s film division.

Previously, Campbell was the Head of Film at Apex Entertainment where he produced “Chappaquiddick,” directed by John Curran, and was an executive producer on “The Miracle Season,” directed by Sean McNamara. Additionally, he was an executive producer on “Fallen,”

directed by Scott Hicks and based on the International best-selling book series.

Campbell was a production and development executive at Lotus Entertainment and its earlier incarnation, Inferno Entertainment, where he was involved with the development and production of a slate of films including “The Grey,” “Killing Them Softly,” “Grace Of Monaco” and “The Kids Are Alright.”

Campbell began his film career at NewLine Cinema, where he was a studio executive at from 2004 to 2008. At NewLine he developed a number of movies including the “The Final Destination,” the fourth film in the successful franchise released in 2009.

Campbell has advanced bachelor degrees in English Literature and Anthropology from Occidental College, Los Angeles, California.

SHANE HURLBUT, ASC (Director of Photography) is a member of the prestigious American Society of Cinematographers and The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The American Society of Cinematographers recognized Hurlbut after his first feature film, “The Rat Pack” (1998), depicting Frank Sinatra and his infamous friends at the height of their influence, directed by Rob Cohen. Consequently, Hurlbut was the youngest cinematographer to be nominated by the American Society of Cinematographers for his work on “The Rat Pack.” He was also nominated by the DVDX Awards in 2003 for his work on “11:14.”

Hurlbut’s films have garnered universal acclaim. His work behind the camera is ever-growing and redefining what it means to be a DP in the industry. He got his start back in the 90s, working with musicians who defined music in the decade, and therefore, Hurlbut defined their visual tone of the era. He is known for Guns N’ Roses’ “November Rain,” as well as working with Smashing Pumpkins, Stone Temple Pilots, The Rolling Stones, and Nirvana. Hurlbut’s versatility as a cinematographer transcends any one genre. He’s filmed action, sports, drama, and comedy

– but it's his attention to story and character that is always at the heart of his arresting visuals. It is Hurlbut's subtlety and creativity with lighting that defines the sheer beauty and atmosphere in his work. The emotion he brings to the movement of the camera, like a dance, walks in line with the character's journey.

Hurlbut has frequent collaborations with talented directors. His most recent work includes Netflix's "Holidate"(2020), directed by John Whitesell; four collaborations with director McG: Netflix's "Rim of The World" (2018), "The Babysitter" (2017), "We Are Marshall" (2006) and "Terminator Salvation" (2009); two collaborations with director David Dobkin: Amblin's "Resident Alien" (2019) and AMC's "Into the Badlands" (2015); two collaborations with director Gabriele Muccino: "Fathers and Daughters" (2015) and "There Is No Place Like Home' (2018); and two collaborations with director Scott Waugh: "Need for Speed" (2014) and "Act of Valor" (2012). When Shane is not working on feature films all over the world, he gives of himself to educate and mentor filmmakers globally.

RICHARD HOOVER (Production Designer) is an American scenic designer, production designer, and art director for theater, television, and film. He won a Tony® Award for scenic design for the Broadway production of "Not About Nightingales" (1999), and is known for his work on the television show "Twin Peaks."

Hoover received his undergraduate degree at Knox College, and his graduate degree from the University of Minnesota, where he was a McKnight fellow. While in Minnesota, Hoover apprenticed in set design at the Tyrone Guthrie Theater and began designing sets for various theater companies. In addition to the Guthrie Theater, Hoover has designed sets for The Actors' Gang, the Geva Theater, and the Mark Taper Forum. His other Broadway credit includes "After the Fall (2004)." In 1982, Hoover began working on films, first as an art director and then later as a production director. His film credits include "It Takes Two (1988);" "Prime Target" (1989); Bob Roberts" (1992); "Ed Wood" (1994); "Dead Man Walking" (1995); Apt Pupil" (1998); "Girl,

Interrupted" (1999); "Cradle Will Rock" (1999); "Payback" (1999); "The Mothman Prophesies" (2002); 'North Country" (2005); "42" (2013); "McFarland, USA" (2015); "The Last Word" (2017); and with director Reginald Hudlin, "Marshall" (2017). He also worked on the cult television series "Twin Peaks" (1990-1991), the television movies "Live From Baghdad" (2002) and "Temple Grandin," and the recent HBO miniseries "The Plot Against America."

In addition to film and television series, Hoover has done commercial work for companies such as Acura, Barbie, British Gas, and Budweiser. Hoover was affiliated with the Lester Polakov Design Studio, later known as the Studio and Forum of Stage Design, and also taught workshops at the Filmschule in Cologne, Germany. He is a member of the Art Directors Guild, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE), and Moving Picture Technicians. In addition to his Tony® Award, he has won a London Critics Circle Theatre Award and Evening Standard Award for Best Designer and a Drama Desk Award for outstanding set design of a play. He was nominated for Emmy® Awards for "Live From Baghdad" and "Temple Grandin." Hoover lives in Los Angeles, California.

TEREL GIBSON, ACE (Editor) graduated from Emory University in 1997. After graduating, he moved to New York and immediately fell in love with the art of film editing. He got his film education working with some legends of the field. Terel has collaborated on such films as "The Cider House Rules" (1999), "Little Miss Sunshine" (2006) and "The Fighter" (2010). Since branching out on his own, he has worked on numerous films as lead editor. Some highlights include "The Kings of Summer" (2013), "Sorry To Bother You" (2018) and "Ready or Not" (2019).

MARCUS MILLER (Original Score Composer) has been dubbed one of the most influential artists of our time. At the top of his game for over 30 years, he is a two-time Grammy award winner, (U.S.), winner of the 2013 Edison Award for Lifetime Achievement In Jazz (Holland), winner of

the 2010 Victoire du Jazz (France) and in 2013, was appointed a UNESCO Artist For Peace. His characteristic bass sound can be heard on a limitless catalog of musical hits from Bill Wither's "Just The Two Of Us" , to Luther Vandross' "Never Too Much", to songs from Chaka Khan, David Sanborn, Herbie Hancock, Eric Clapton, Aretha Franklin, George Benson, Elton John and Bryan Ferry to name a few. With his distinctive style - a unique combination of funk, groove, soul and pure technical skills - Miller has been referred to as one of the most significant bass players in jazz, R &B, fusion and soul. Bass Player Magazine includes him on its list of ten most influential jazz players of this generation.

In addition to these career highlights, Miller has a rich and very deep resume of outstanding collaborations, including a 15- year song-writing and production partnership with Luther Vandross, resulting in 13 consecutive platinum selling albums of which Miller Produced 7, and a double GRAMMY® win in 1992 - for the double platinum selling album Power Of Love/Love Power winning "Best R & B Vocal" as well as "Best R & B Song". It was the last number one R & B album for 12 years before Vandross' mega cross-over pop hit "Dance With My Father" in 2001.

Miller also left an indelible mark on the careers of artists as varied and talented as David Sanborn, Roberta Flack, Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan, Al Jarreau, Bob James, Lalah Hathaway and Wayne Shorter. Most notable, after several years of touring in Miles Davis' band in the early 80's, Miller developed a close professional and personal relationship with Davis which led to his collaboration on three critically acclaimed albums - the most famous being the ground-breaking album and title song "Tutu," making Miller the last primary producer, arranger and composer for this great jazz legend. The album and title song, which Miller composed, produced, arranged and performed on, is widely regarded as a significant addition to the canon of contemporary jazz music. Not only did the album win two GRAMMY® awards, it is considered to be one of the definitive Miles Davis albums of our time.

Most Miller aficionados know that as a composer, Miller has an endless list of film and television credits to his name. Miller rose from writing the go-go mega hit 'Da Butt' for Spike Lee's 1988 film "School Daze" to becoming the go-to composer for over 20 top urban movies. His film scores include the cult-classic "House Party" (featuring Kid 'N Play - 1990); the Eddie Murphy/Halle Berry classic film "Boomerang" (1992); "Above The Rim" (featuring Tupac Shakur and Marlon Wayans -1994); "Two Can Play That Game" (featuring Vivica Fox, Gabrielle Union, Morris Chestnut and Anthony Anderson - 2001); "This Christmas" (featuring Idris Elba and Chris Brown - 2007); the Chris Rock cult classic "Good Hair" (2009) and "About Last Night' (featuring Kevin Hart and Regina Bell - 2014). Marcus also supplied the music for the successful weekly TV series "Everybody Hates Chris,", currently in syndication.

Most recently, Miller composed the music for the Oscar® nominated film "Marshall" (2017) directed by Reginald Hudlin and starring Chadwick Boseman as a young Thurgood Marshall and Emmy®-award-winning actor Sterling Brown from the hit TV series "This Is Us." The film was the winner of the 2017 Chicago International Film Festival award; the 2017 African American Film Critics Award; the 2017 Hollywood Film Festival Award, and was also a 2017 Image and Critics Choice® award nominee, and received five NAACP Image award nominations.

As if that weren't enough, Miller also broadcasts two weekly radio shows – one in the U.S. and the other in the U.K. "Jazz with Marcus Miller On Miller Time" (affectionately referred to as The Marcus Party by fans) airs every Sunday on SiriusXM. Miller's radio show in London is called "TransAtlantic Jazz With Marcus Miller" and broadcasts each Wednesday on Jazz FM in the UK. Miller is also the annual host and head-line artist on multiple jazz cruises each year offered by Entertainment Cruise Productions including the very popular Blue Note At Sea jazz cruise, as well as the Smooth Jazz Cruise - all of which sell out each year.

On top of all of this, Miller has been a prolific artist and bandleader in his own right for well over 20 years, having released over a dozen albums under his name. Miller tours extensively worldwide with a band of gifted young musicians - perhaps reminding audiences of a certain

Miles Davis who did the same for Miller and other young musicians like Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter.

Miller is the performer/composer/producer and arranger of 10 critically acclaimed solo projects, among them “The Sun Don’t Lie” (featuring Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter); “Tales” (featuring Me’Shell NdegéOcello and Q-Tip); “Silver Rain” (featuring guest artist Eric Clapton); “Free” (featuring Corinne Bailey Rae); “A Night In Monte Carlo” (featuring the Monte Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra) and “Renaissance” (2012). His album M2 won the GRAMMY® award for best Contemporary Jazz Album in 2001.

In 2015, Miller released “Afrodeezia,” an album inspired by his role as a UNESCO spokesperson for the Slave Routes Project. For that album, Miller incorporated musical influences from countries along the Atlantic slave route passage, collaborating with musicians from West Africa, North Africa, South America and the Caribbean. The album earned a 2016 GRAMMY® nomination for Best Contemporary Jazz Album and Miller performed more than 250 sold-out shows worldwide behind the album’s release.

Miller’s current project - the new genre-defying album “Laid Black,” due to be released June 1st, brings the story of the “Afrodeezia” journey “home” where we find Miller incorporating more modern, urban elements into his music from trap, hip-hop, R&B to gospel. Of this music, Miller says: “After ‘Afrodeezia,’ where I did a lot of traveling all over the world, I thought it would be cool to bring into the mix, some of the influences of our time that I was listening to right here at home. My band and the guest artists I recruited to collaborate with on this album are all versatile enough to play music ranging from be-bop to hip-hop. That made the musical mix I wanted to pursue on this album very possible.”

Anyone who has listened to Miller’s music or experienced Miller’s concerts live, knows that they are in for quite an experience with the new album. Miller’s powerful, jazz/funk bass playing is out in full force with this music – pushing boundaries and taking jazz to new levels.

Miller, along with his incredible band of young talents, will be sure to excite, challenge and transport audiences.

The new album, “Laid Black,” features special guest performances by Trombone Shorty, Kirk Whalum, Patches Stewart, Take 6, Jonathan Butler and guest vocalist Selah Sue. Laid Black is certain to thrill and exhilarate Miller fans and will help continue to propel Miller to the world superstar status of fusion, funk, soul and jazz master!

For 20 years, MARK ELLIS (Co-Producer) has been a leader in scripted sports action for Hollywood productions. Elis has directed Oscar®-winning actors and Hall of Fame athletes in over 40 movies, grossing more than one billion dollars at the box office. He’s also collaborated on multiple TV projects and commercial development. Ellis made his directorial debut in 2012 with “One Heart,” a true story about a football team made up of juvenile offenders, who land in a small town, and a football coach who made a decision that would change the lives of the players on the field that night. Ellis has been a critical component in films and honored with nine ESPY nominations for “Best Sports Movie of the Year,” including three award-winning films, ”The Rookie, “Miracle” and “Semi-Pro.” Ellis played college football at Appalachian State and is a graduate of the University of South Carolina.

JORDAN FEAGAN (Co-Producer) brings more than 25 years of experience in entertainment, representing and producing content for sports and TV talent as well as international sports brands. Since 1991, he has successfully co-founded and launched the athlete management companies SLAM and Alliance Sports; Hollywood’s one-stop sports production shop Sports Studio; and side-by-side with Flapjack, his current multi-platform production banner, Rowdy Entertainment.

Feagan recently produced “A Chef’s Voyage,” a documentary detailing Chef David Kinch and his team's journey from their 3 Michelin Star in California on a one of a kind "four hands" collaboration with three legendary chefs at their iconic restaurants in Paris, Provence and Marseille. Prior to that, he produced “We Out Here,” a 2013 micro-documentary that chronicles the limitless will of a group of city kids who haven't been dealt the strongest hands, but are striving to overcome generational obstacles and bias in a popular sport.